

Floyd Werle Proves A Point

by Dick Haight

Floyd E. Werle, director of music of Faith United Methodist Church, has been hailed by many to be one of the nation's leading composers in all forms, having served nearly thirty years as Chief of Composition for the world-famous United States Air Force Band and Singing Sergeants. His works include three trumpet concerti written especially for famed virtuoso Doc Severinsen, which have been performed by nearly all the major American orchestras, as well as two symphonies, several other large concerted works, and many pieces for symphonic band which have given him instant identity with nearly all high school wind instrument students.

In the church music field he has been notably successful, with a large and growing catalog of published anthems, most of which were written especially for the choirs of Faith Church. He has cut a new path for congregational singing by composing nearly 300 hymns in styles designed specifically to be easily grasped by the average parishioner, and with landmark success, both in contemporary and traditional settings. His introits and other special service music have received particular note.

A native of Billings, Montana, Mr. Werle attended the University of Michigan as an organ student of Dr. Marilyn Mason and a wind-instrument protege of Dr. William D. Revelli. He became a member of both the famed marching and concert bands, writing many of the football halftime shows for the former and appearing as keyboard soloist with the latter. He is a member of ASCAP, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Phi Beta Mu, and serves on the Council of the Baltimore Conference Chapter of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music and the Arts.

Entertaining the Potomac Valley

Chapter in March, Mr. Werle played a concert at a classic organ and programmed a highly-theatrical list of music. He called his concert the "Endangered Species." The concert was given at Faith United Methodist Church in Rockville, Maryland. It was real theatre pipe organ, even if played on a liturgical instrument.

Floyd made the newly-installed Marshall Stone Special organ (27 ranks) really talk. He accompanied the early Buster Keaton silent film *One Week* and was superb. He made the organ give off the sound effects of drum, tick-tock, train, automobile and created moods that could only come out of that marvelous "box full of whistles" — all without traps, drums or toy counter.

Actor George Kennedy congratulating Floyd Werle on his compositional work with the U.S. Air Force Band. Left, is Kennedy; center, Colonel Arnold Gabriel, conductor of the Air Force Band and the Singing Sergeants. At right is Floyd Werle and his wife Violet.

(Photo Courtesy of Dick Haight)



Floyd Werle. Master composer and superb organist. (Rich Studio Photo)

Along with his affiliations with a number of prestigious groups and associations, Floyd is also an active member of ATOS and the Potomac Valley Chapter. Since he has performed a number of chapter-sponsored events which were acclaimed by all in attendance, you can be certain we will hear more about this fine musician in the future. □

